

Washington, D.C.—U.S. Congressman Mike Pence delivered the following speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives today regarding the death of Osama bin Laden and paying tribute to Hoosiers who have given their lives in the War on Terror:

"Osama bin Laden is dead. Justice delayed became justice served. And I stand to pay a debt of honor and a debt of gratitude to all of those who brought us to this day.

"The first time most Americans heard Osama bin Laden's name was perhaps from that podium.

"Just more than a week after September 11th, we gathered here. President George W. Bush spoke that name into history. And every day since it has been clear to freedom-loving people across this planet that we had to reach this day to answer for the tragic and brutal events visited upon our country on September 11th.

"I rise to pay a debt of honor and debt of gratitude.

"I commend President Barack Obama for his decisive leadership. Making the tactical decisions that were made, as well as providing our troops with the resources they needed to get the job done and come home safe.

"I commend his predecessor, President George W. Bush, whose tenacity and commitment to the war on terror clearly brought us to this day.

"I also commend our intelligence community who year upon year never lost sight of the demands of justice.

"But I mostly rise today to pay a debt of honor and gratitude to the members of our U.S. Armed Forces, past and present. Those Sunday night who slid down the ropes, captured and killed Osama bin Laden, are in our hearts. But also those over the last 10 years who have made the necessary sacrifices in the War on Terror. And I rise today to particularly pay tribute to them.

"I was here on 9/11. After we had the opportunity for the roads to open, I made my way back to our small home in Northern Virginia and there with my wife and our children, 6, 7, and 8, we gathered for a short family meeting and for prayer before I would come back into the Capitol.

"My little 6-year-old daughter stopped me in the kitchen as I was walking to the car and she said, 'Daddy, I have to talk to you.'

"I said, 'I've got to go.'

"She said, 'Daddy, I've got to talk to you.'

"I said, 'What?'

"She said, 'If we have to make a war, do you have to go?'

"And I dropped down on one knee and I threw my arms around that 6-year-old, and I said, 'Daddy's too old.'

"But every day since I thought of all the daddies and mommies who looked the little ones in the eye, looked their spouses and their parents in the eye and they said, 'I have to go.' And they went. And some of them didn't come home.

"In the Sixth Congressional District, we have a roll of the fallen heroes of the war on terror. I recite them today with the deepest respect and gratitude.

Lance Corporal Matthew Smith of Anderson

Private Shawn Pahnke of Shelbyville

Specialist Chad Keith of Batesville

Staff Sergeant Frederick Miller, Jr. of Hagerstown

Sergeant Robert Colvill, Jr. of Anderson

Specialist Raymond White of Elwood

Lance Corporal Scott Zubowski of New Castle

Staff Sergeant Michael Bechert of New Castle

Sergeant Jeremy Wright of Shelbyville

Master Sergeant Michael Hiester of Bluffton

Staff Sergeant Brian Keith Miller of Pendleton

Specialist Johnathan Lahmann of Richmond

Lance Corporal Layton Crass of Richmond

Lance Corporal Andrew Whitacre of Bryant

Specialist William Justin McClellan of New Castle

Private First Class Jaiciae Pauley of Muncie

Staff Sergeant Phillip Chad Jenkins of Decatur

Sergeant Jeremy McQueary of my hometown of Columbus

"This was a victory for freedom. And as much as it belongs to those who made the decisions, developed the intelligence, who slid down the ropes and stepped into harm's way Sunday night, this victory belongs to those who lie in earthen graves, in my district and all over this country who brought it about.

"Winston Churchill once said that 'We sleep soundly in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm.'

"Today I pay a debt of gratitude to a Commander-in-Chief, present and past, and to all the members of the Armed Forces who allow us this day to say, 'Justice is served. Osama bin Laden is dead.'"

###